

28. *MACROSPINOSA CUJA* (HAM.-BUCH.) A NEW RECORD FROM KERALA

Sciaenid fishes are an important fishery resource in the warm coastal waters and estuaries of the world. Many species use the estuarine environment as a nursery and feeding ground for the young; they also ascend rivers but do not live there permanently. 20 genera of the family Sciaenidae are recorded from the Indian region, of which 11 genera inhabit inland waters (Talwar and Jhingran 1991).

*Macropsinosa cuja* (Ham.-Buch.)

*Bola cuja* Ham.-Buch. 1822, Fishes of Ganges: 81, 369, pl. 12, fig. 27 (type locality: estuaries of Ganges).

*Sciaena cuja* Day, 1876 Fishes of India: 187; Day, 1889, Fauna of British India, Fishes, 2: 115.

*Macropsinosa cuja* Talwar, Fauna of India, Pisces: (in press), fig. 3.

**Distinguishing features:** D X-XI + I 27-29; A II 6-7; P I 17; V 15.

Body elongate with a rather blunt snout; snout profile evenly decurved in young, flatter over eyes with age, profile then rising steeply to occiput and highly arched back. Dorsal fin deeply notched, second to fourth spines with stout bases, third spine longest. Second anal spine robust. Caudal fin rhomboid. It can be easily identified by the presence of a series of oblique, dark scales above the lateral line and faintly horizontal streaks below the lateral line.

**Distribution:** India: Gangetic estuary, lower reaches of Chalakudy river (Kerala).

**Remarks:** From India, *Macropsinosa cuja* has so far been reported only from the Gangetic estuary. From the erstwhile Travancore, seven other species of the family Sciaenidae were reported, but not *M. cuja*, (Pillai 1929). Three species of the genus *Sciaena* were recorded from Malabar region (Day 1865). Earlier studies conducted in Kerala did not report *M. cuja* from fresh waters of Kerala. Specimens collected from

Kanakkankadavu area, Ernakulam dist., in the Chalakudy river extends the range of *Macropsinosa cuja* to central Kerala. Kanakkankadavu is located near the confluence of Periyar and Chakaludy rivers less than 40 m above msl and 19 km away from the sea coast.

Chalakudy and Mangalapuzha, a branch of Periyar river, join at Elanthikara, where tidal influence can be noticed in Chalakudy river. Before it joins with the Periyar river, a temporary sand bund is constructed near Kanakkankadavu, mainly to prevent the mixing of salt water and fresh water. During the rainy season this bund breaks and fresh water mixes with the sea water, facilitating the migration of marine fishes. The present collection was taken from the freshwater side of the river. Hence, it can be concluded that this fish may migrate to the fresh water during the rains for breeding and feeding and may be trapped there when the bund is constructed. The present observation also showed the survival of this fish in fresh water with very little trace of salinity. The type locality of *M. cuja* is the estuary of River Ganges. 9 sciaenid fishes have so far been recorded from Malabar and Travancore areas of Kerala. This is the first record of this species from the fresh waters of Kerala.

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29. NEW RECORD OF *STIGMATOGOBIOUS OLIGACTIS* (BLEEKER) FROM INDIA

(With one text-figure)

One specimen of *Stigmatogobius oligactis* (Bleeker) was collected from Dhom reservoir of Satara dist., Maharashtra. Dhom reservoir is a man-made impoundment across the Krishna and Vaitali rivers. This species is not recorded anywhere in India by earlier workers. Hence it is a new record for India.

Day (1878) Hora and Misra (1942), Suter (1944), Kulkarni and Ranade (1974), Jeyaram (1981), Talwar and Jhingran (1991), Ghate and Pawar (1992), Menon (1992) do not mention this species. Extralimitally, Weber and Beaufort (1953) recorded it from rivers of Java.

**Habitat**: The substrate is mixed with sand and boulders.

**Diagnostic features**: Body elongate, anteriorly cylindrical, posteriorly compressed. Head depressed. Snout convex, tongue bilobate. Head scaled above, behind the eye, and laterally on opercle with large cycloid scales. Head with crowded blackish spots on lateral sides.

**Measurements of specimen**: Total length 4.5 cm, Standard length 3.6 cm, Head length 1.2 cm, Head width 0.7 m, Eye diameter 0.3 cm, Body depth 0.7 cm, Snout length 0.3 cm, Mouth

width 0.6 cm, Predorsal scales 10. Lateral line scales 29. Depth of caudal peduncle 0.4 cm. Dorsal fin D1 VI; D2 i/6, A i/6, Pectoral fin 18.

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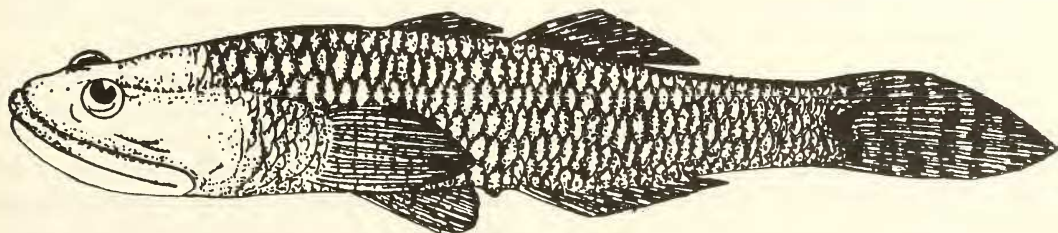


Fig. 1: *Stigmatogobius oligactis* (Bleeker)